

# The Value of Memorizing Scripture

John M. Buttrey II

A greatly neglected aspect of adult Bible study is the memorization of Scripture. As children, memorization was a critical part of our learning process. We memorized the books of the Bible, the names of the apostles, and various verses of Scripture. Children today still do the same. However, when we became adults, we “put away childish things.” Right? Wrong! Please understand, memorizing Scripture is not a childish thing. There is a great value in memorizing Scripture. Throughout the Bible, the value of such is seen in a number of different ways.

To the children of Israel, God expressed the need for memorizing the words He had given to them. In fact, more than just expressing a need for such, God gave them a command to retain His words in their minds:

These words, which I am commanding you today, **shall be on your heart**,  
Deuteronomy 6:6 (Emphasis Mine)

God’s word would only be on their heart (mind) as they worked at memorizing or retaining it.

One Psalmist expressed well the value of memorizing the Scriptures. Remember these familiar words:

Your word I have **treasured in my heart**, that I may not sin against You.  
Psalm 119:11 (Emphasis Mine)

To treasure the word in his heart would require memorizing the word. When we memorize something, we place it in safekeeping within the mind.

Notice the value or purpose for treasuring the word in his heart: He memorized the word so that he would not sin against God. In other words, with the word of God safely secured within his mind, he could call upon it when temptation came his way. You may recall that this is how Jesus overcame the temptations of the devil during His forty days of fasting in the wilderness. With each temptation, Jesus replied, “It is written” (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10).

The Psalm from which this verse was taken, was designed as an inspired of God memorizing tool for the people of Israel. It is known as an acrostic psalm. Each verse and each section of the psalm relate to the Hebrew alphabet. Think of it as something similar to how one memorizes the lines and spaces on a staff of music: “Every Good Boy Does Fine” helps one remember the notes for each line (E, G, B, D, F). The word FACE helps one memorize, or remember, the notes on the spaces of a staff of music: (F, A, C, E).

Another interesting example in Scripture demonstrating the importance of committing God’s word to memory, is seen in the instructions God gave Israel for any man who would be king:

“Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, **he shall write for himself a copy of this law** on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be

with him and **he shall read it all the days of his life**, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,  
Deuteronomy 17:18-19 (Emphasis Mine)

There are numerous other examples from God's word that could be cited, all of which demonstrate the importance of memorizing Scripture.

For some reason, as adults we have become convinced that we can no longer memorize verses from the Bible. I wonder, is it you and I who have done that, or the enemy? Satan would love for us to neglect treasuring the word of God in our hearts. If the word is not present when temptation comes our way, he can enjoy much greater success, while you and I suffer more and more defeat. Hence, Paul tells us to "gird our loins with truth" (Eph. 6:14).

If we are going to be able to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3); if we are going to be equipped to preach the word in season and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2); if the church is going to be a solid pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15); we must work at memorizing the word of God.